Mission-Aransas Watershed Wetland Conservation Plan

Restoration Plan Database:
Crystal Reports of Individual Plan Summaries

I. BASIC PLAN DATA

Plan name:

Mission-Aransas Watershed Wetland Conservation Plan

Brief description of plan:

This plan was developed through an 18-month project to 1) evaluate key wetland issues identified by local governments, private landowners and citizens living in the planning area, 2) determine alternatives to conserve wetlands in the planning area while allowing for economic growth, and 3) produce a plan that will serve as a model for other coastal communities. This document highlights the development of the conservation plan, as well as the goal, objectives and alternatives decided upon by a volunteer work group in relation to wetland issues important in the planning area. The planning area encompasses portions of Aransas, Refugio and San Patricio counties, in which almost every type of wetland can be found.

Region the plan is located within:

Gulf of Mexico Region

Watershed(s) included within the plan:

G300x , G305x

Area plan covers (in square miles):

188.00 square miles

Plan scale:

Multi-county

Plan's lead organization(s):

The Texas General Land Office, Center for Coastal Studies, Coastal Bend Land Trust

Plan's Main Contact Information:

The Texas General Land Office
Coastal Division
1700 North Congress Avenue
Austin, Texas 78701-1495

On-line version of plan:

Date of original plan:

II. TECHNICAL INFORMATION

Plan includes restoration goals: Y

Level of detail of the goals:

G

Summary of the goals:

The overriding principle of this voluntary wetland conservation plan is to preserve the quantity, quality and diversity of wetlands and living resources in the Mission-Aransas Watershed for future generations. Monitoring Objective: Establish long-term monitoring programs in the Mission-Aransas Watershed that provide appropriate data to evaluate the health of wetlands, rivers and estuaries. Stewardship Objective: Prevent degradation of wetlands in the Mission-Aransas Watershed through use of best management practices and avoidance of sensitive areas. Restoration Objective: Restore the functions of degraded wetlands (shoreline erosion control, sediment trapping, water quality improvement, flood storage and desynchronization, groundwater recharge-discharge, food chain support, nutrient export, fisheries habitat, and wildlife habitat) in the Mission-Aransas Watershed. Protection Objective: Preserve wetlands in the Mission-Aransas Watershed through stewardship, management and conservation.

Plan recommends or uses criteria for selecting restoration sites (e.g. cost benefit ratio, ecological benefits):

Y

Summary of the criteria:

The Wildlife Habitat Appraisal Procedure (WHAP-Frye 1995) was developed for rapid evaluation of tracts of land in the state of Texas to determine the suitability as wildlife habitat. As with the Habitat Evaluation Procedure (HEP), WHAP can be used to generate habitat quality values which, when combined with acreage figures, provide a measure of available habitat units. The procedure can also be used to establish baseline data prior to an anticipated action, or to predict the number of habitat units likely to be lost or gained as a result of proposed actions. WHAP is a preferred method of evaluation in most habitats except for marshes, where less structural diversity and the lack of woody vegetation limits effective monitoring of a site AFTER its initial selection as a restoration area. For wetlands, the Wetland Evaluation Technique (WET) will be used to rapidly assess a wetland's capacity to perform functions and values. This may be prior to, during and or after restoration activities have commenced. WHAP Methodology 1) Definition of the study area and delineation of cover types 2) Evaluation of representative sites within each vegetation cover type 3) Completion of a biological components field evaluation form for each cover type 4)calculation of the average habitat quality assigned to each cover type using the biological components field evaluation form

Plan recommends restoration of specific project sites:

N

Plan includes a discussion of funding sources:

Y

Plan addresses long-term protection of restored sites:

Y

Partners included in developing the plan:

Federal
State
Local
Business/Industry
Non-profit Organizations
Academia
Foundations
Private landowners

Type(s) of public outreach included during plan development:

Held public workshops, meetings, open house, or scoping meetings
Held focus groups
Kept a contact list of interested parties
Mailed or e-mailed information to a contact list
Distributed brochures or other materials
Formed an advisory group(s)
Involved the media through news releases, public service announcements, etc.

Plan includes public outreach as part of plan implementation (e.g. annual public meeting, local group participation):

Y

Plan discusses the application of innovative approaches to restoration:

Y

Summary of the discussion:

Case studies of various practices

Plan make use of GIS mapping capabilities:

N

Plan addresses monitoring/reference sites for ecosystem level monitoring (baseline conditions) by:

G

Plan addresses monitoring/reference sites for project level monitoring by:

G

The plan discusses or coordinates with other restoration plans covering the same geographic area:

N

Other plan names:

Plan contains detailed information on historic and/or current habitat size, rate of loss, acres restored or protected, etc.):

Y

Summary of this habitat information:

The Mission-Aransas estuary encompasses the northern region known as the Texas Coastal Bend. This refers to the curvature or bend in the central Texas coastline and includes the counties of Calhoun, Refugio, Aransas, San Patricio, Nueces and the northeastern half of Kleberg. The area is characterized as a subhumid-to-semiarid east coast subtropical climate with extreme variability in precipitation and with generally high humidity and infrequent, but significant, killing frosts. Hydrographic conditions of the area are influenced primarily by climatic conditions, freshwater inflow and to a lesser extent, tidal exchange. Three major wetland classifications are found within the area- marine, estuarine and palustrine.